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Mr. Sulaiman J. Burrows.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

مُحَمَّدٌ وَصَلَّى عَلَى رَسُولِهِ مُحَمَّدٍ خَلِيقَةِ النَّبِيِّينَ

THE ISLAMIC REVIEW

Vol. XXIV.]

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A DECLARATION

I, Anthony Eugene Novak, son of John Novak, of Prague, Czechoslovakia, do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I adopt Islam as my religion, that I worship One and only Allah alone, that I believe Muhammad to be His Messenger and servant, that I respect equally all prophets, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, etc., that I will live a Muslim life by the help of Allah.

LA ILAHA ILLALLAH MUHAMMAD-UR-RASUL ALLAH.

(Sd.) A. E. NOVAK.

ORTHODOXY IN ISLAM¹

BY MAULVI AFTAB-UD-DIN AHMAD

O you who believe, be careful of (your duty to) Allah with the care which is due to Him, and do not die unless you are Muslims.

And hold fast to the Covenant of Allah all together, and be not disunited, and remember the favour of Allah on you when you were enemies, then He united your hearts, so by His favour you became brethren and you were on the brink of a pit of fire, then He saved you from it, thus does Allah make clear to you His Communications that you may follow the right way.

And from among you there should be a party who invite the good and enjoin what is right and forbid the wrong, and these it is that will be successful.

And be not like those who became divided and disagreed after clear arguments had come to them, and these it is that shall have a grievous chastisement.²

Although in some respects a little tiring, it is a most pleasant and rare coincidence when we get Eid and the Juma together. The Imam of the Eid Congregation in the morning sounded a very timely note of warning in the course of his sermon, and in view of what has recently appeared in the British press regarding the question of Orthodoxy in Islam, I am tempted to expatiate a little on what has been touched on by my esteemed friend, His Excellency Sheikh Hafiz Wahba. The verses of the Qur-án, which I have just quoted, will form the basis of my observations. In the interests of Truth I feel obliged to enter a strong protest against the suggestion that there have ever been any schisms in Islam. I am fully conscious of the gravity of this statement. I take full responsibility for it, and I desire to insist further that unlike any other religion of the world, Islam admits of no sectarian division—and this for obvious reasons. Every Believer is bound to believe, completely and unreservedly, in the whole of the Qur-ánic Revelation; which, in its turn, completely defines the position, the creed and the practices of the

¹Friday Sermon delivered at the Mosque, Woking, England, on the 27th December, 1935.

²The Holy Qur-án, 3 : 101-104.

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Religion without leaving any loophole for difference of opinion. The fundamentals, as well as the general structure, of the religious life being thus defined, there is no room left for any heretical opinion within the fold. There have, no doubt, been differences of opinion, and even strife founded thereon, in Islamic Society, and it is these unfortunately that have by outsiders been regarded as sectarian differences in Islam. This, I hasten to tell you, is entirely a wrong reading of the situation. The following verse in the Holy Qur-án sufficiently explains why :—

He it is Who has revealed the Book to you; some of its verses are decisive, they are the basis of the Book, and others are allegorical; then, as for those in whose hearts there is perversity, they follow the part of it which is allegorical, seeking to mislead and seeking to give it their own interpretation.....

In other words, the Qur-ánic discourses are of two kinds. One deals with the doctrines and practices of the Religion, stated in positive language, and admitting of no two interpretations; the other of a suggestive and mystical nature, admitting of various interpretations, so that its comprehension varies from man to man, and from age to age. Now, as Islam is a comprehensive religion containing guidance for all ages and all peoples, the exigencies of a particular society and a particular age should undoubtedly require that some emphasis be laid on one or other of these various teachings; and at the crucial moments, a group of Believers has invariably been found to call the attention of the community to the necessary emphasis. But, as the question of emphasis is not a question of principle, but of rather the interpretation of facts, the sponsors of the new Movement have always shown the natural human weakness of making out a case for a so-called principle from what is purely a matter of the interpretation of facts. But as the principles of religion are unequivocally stated in the Qur-án in the part called Ummul-Kitab, or basis of the Book, the zealots have, of necessity, fallen back on the

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allegorical part of it. Be that as it may, the very cry of principle is bound to, and in fact has, roused not only the attention, as may be expected, but also a certain amount of opposition in the ranks of Received Opinion giving rise to heated controversy, and even sharp divisions for a while. But it is to the eternal credit of Islam that every such controversy has always raged round one common centre, namely, the Qur-án, which never fails to supply unambiguous data for religious inference. Naturally, in each case of difference, after a period of excitement, the Qur-án brings about reconciliation between the contending parties by a restatement of the actual principles involved to the great advantage of the community as a whole ; inasmuch as in the course of the newly aroused enthusiasm the old school of thought also imperceptibly recognises and rectifies its own omissions. I assert emphatically that this is true of all differences in Islam—from the oldest, which date back to the time of the Third Caliph, right up to the latest, which has rightly been exercising the Faith of Believers all the world over. Whatever bitterness such differences may create in the fold, I assure those who need such assurance that both the parties have ultimately to fall back on the Qur-án, which has the miraculous power of bringing home to zealots on both sides the extravagance of their zeal. If it rouses the old school to the significance of the new situation calling into being the new opinion, it will also curb excesses of the new school by making it realise that it has been confusing Principle with Philosophy—the *Muhkamát* with the *Mutashábihát*. History will bear me out when I say that every protest in Islam has eventually been embodied in the general opinion of the Muslim world, and that the difference of any given so-called sect with the main body has never been one of principle, but of emphasis on a principle. And the whole of this fortunate fact is due to the dignity and the wisdom of the Qur-án.

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Differ we must from one another owing to the difference in the reactions to the facts of life of our individual natures, but, to our great relief, the Qur-án is there to turn this difference to the advantage of us all. Let us, therefore, without any further delay, hasten to the Qur-án for the needed intervention and arbitration. I am afraid, generally speaking, we have not been greatly inclined to do so. We have been relying too much on our own intellect and experience, and have not been showing what the Qur-án calls the regard to Allah which is due to Him. This is why our quarrels have been so prolonged, and this is my message to-day—one of the happiest days in the course of many years—to my Muslim friends in Great Britain—British as well as non-British.

For the rising generation of Islam, which I can still happily call my own generation, I should like to add one word more. While reading the history of Muslim differences and strifes, you should not feel in any way embarrassed. I, personally, am extremely proud of them. I assure you, my friends, regarded in their proper light, they do not make distasteful reading, as is generally supposed, but a most absorbing study, proving the active interest of the Ever-living God in the affairs of this blessed Community. If the Qur-án revealed the existence of God to the Holy Prophet and his companions the history of Islam has verified in its course His unbounded care for the moral and spiritual security and alertness of the Muslim Community. But, in order to understand this Truth, we have to discard the false promises supplied to us by the malicious historians of Christian thought, and re-read the whole situation in the light of our own emancipated perception. What I deplore, however, is that there is a tendency in some quarters to create schisms on the basis of these differences. I remind you that this separatist tendency is the effect of foreign influence, and is alien to the character of Islam.

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Let us, therefore, rise as one man to give the lie to the enemy's propaganda, to which unfortunately even some of our own people have fallen a prey, that Islam is divided against itself, that there have been heresies in Islam, and that Islamic brotherhood is not so much a fact as theory. Let us prove, to the astonishment of the world, that the Church of Islam has ever been but one, like the God of Islam. This would be the best service to be rendered to the cause of Islam at this moment, and it is bound to prove a turning point in the history of our religion.

With this Message for this auspicious day, which, I hope, you will take to heart as deeply as it is meant to be taken.

ISLAM AND THE FUTURE

BY C. A. SOORMA

(*Continued from Vol. XXIV, p. 38*)

Coming now to the question of the equality of the sexes, I would point out that Islam's attitude on this very important question is one of absolute impartiality. In Islam man and woman have been placed on a footing of perfect equality, legally and spiritually. In fact, comparatively speaking, the legal status of woman in Islam is certainly superior to that of her sisters under other social and religious systems, as I have described elsewhere. I have come to this conclusion, after very careful study, and the more I hear the more I become convinced of the fact that the world owes a debt of deep gratitude to the Great Arabian Prophet for having given to woman those rights to which she is legally entitled, although they had been denied to her in the ages past.

In my opinion, a faith that lays down and practises the cardinal principles of the brotherhood of man, democracy, the equality of the sexes and *Zakat*, is inherently

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equipped with those qualities which will enable it to travel along the path of progress; and it is because of these qualities that Islam is and will remain a world-force, as I shall attempt to show you a little later.

For us fully to appreciate the future of Islam, it will also be necessary to go back to the past. The great advance made by the early Muslims within the first three centuries after the death of the Prophet is undoubtedly one of the most striking and glorious chapters in the history of mankind.

At a time when Europe was plunged in the darkness of ignorance, the Saracens were holding aloft the torch of science and culture, and thereby preserving for mankind the learning and wisdom of the ages. One has only to glance at the glories of the Omayyads in Spain and Damascus, and of the Abbasides in Baghdad, to become convinced of the fact that, as long as we cultivated learning and enjoyed intellectual freedom, we were able not only to hold our own against the world, but also to become teachers and leaders of other nations. Europe to-day acknowledges, though in a grudging manner, the debt she owes to Saracenic culture; and while appreciating the progress and culture of the early Muslims, one cannot but deeply deplore the present plight of the bulk of the Muslim population of the world. Their condition stands out in such striking contrast to that of the early Muslims that one sometimes wonders whether we actually bear any affinity to them at all!

There are many causes for our present unhappy condition. Such causes are either external or internal. Among the internal causes, I regard the disappearance of intellectual freedom as being the gravest. Under the Abbasides, the Mutazelas or Rationalists enjoyed absolute freedom of thought. It was due to this that they were able not only to preserve the wisdom and

learning of ancient Greece and Rome, but themselves to make most valuable contributions to human knowledge. Time does not permit me to dilate upon their achievements, but I should like to state, that so long as the Rationalist school flourished, there was unbounded progress in Islam. The Rationalists, following and adopting the spirit of the Law, were yet not wholly concerned with the letter of the Law. The result was that Law became elastic, capable of advance and development; and the great principles of Juridical Equity, Deduction and Analogy were built up at this time; but the moment intellectual freedom declined, the Law became rigid and incapable of further expansion and development. It was due to the power of the "*Jabarias*" or the "Traditionists" in Islam that the greatest blow was struck at intellectual freedom. This school did not permit any expression of opinion other than what was contained or supposed to be contained in the "Traditions" and in the Qur-án. To them, the Law had to be applied strictly, and they denied the right of any person to depart, even in the smallest measure, from the ways of tradition and orthodoxy and from the interpretation put upon the Law by the priestly class. There can be no doubt that the destruction of intellectual freedom in Islam has been the chief cause of its decline.

Coming to the other internal causes for this decline, I may mention selfishness, internecine warfare and an inordinate love of luxury and pomp. Once these evils made their appearance, further progress became impossible.

Among the external causes must be mentioned the expulsion of the Moors from Spain. The Saracens had made Spain the garden of Europe. Cordova, Granada and Seville, amongst other cities, were seats of learning and culture older than even Oxford and Cambridge, and to these seats of learning came scholars and students

from the four corners of the then known world—indeed, if my memory serves me right, one of the early Popes also received his education in one of the Moorish Universities in Spain. Then came the destruction of Baghdad by the Tartars. In Baghdad had been founded one of the oldest Universities in the world, and it is stated that Mamoon had gathered around him all the greatest men and thinkers of his age. A glance at the Abbaside history and the achievements of Mamoon is sufficient to show the great advance made by us in those days. When the Tartars razed Baghdad to the ground, they not only destroyed the flower of Islam, but perpetrated also an unpardonable crime against humanity. They cut down at one stroke the wisdom and the learning of the ages, and left behind them nothing but wreck and ruin. An equally serious crime against humanity was the burning of the Alexandrian Library. These blows were struck at a time when Islam was incapable of resisting them, weakened as it then was by internecine warfare and other internal causes.

Thus, we see that from about the twelfth century onwards until the end of the last century, Islam had been asleep. While amazing changes were going on around us we slumbered on caring not what passed by our doors. This naturally resulted in loss of temporal and spiritual power, and by the end of the last century, very large slices of once Muslim territory had passed into foreign hands. One after another, independent Muslim States were subjugated, and their territories either annexed by Western Powers, or placed under their political suzerainty. Up to the outbreak of the World War, the only really independent Muslim State in the world was Turkey, but even she was groaning under the misrule of the Ottoman Sultans.

Intellectually, the Musalmans, up to the end of the last century, were in exactly the same position and state

as people were in the Middle Ages. Orthodoxy and absolutism in everything had taken such a strong hold on the minds of men that it was not possible for anyone to defy them, and we, like many others, followed the path of least resistance, by accepting without question what we were taught and given.

But, as very often happens, in this darkness there came a glimmer of light. Towards the latter half of the last century there were heard, for the first time, unmistakable sounds of the re-awakening of Islam. This re-awakening, in my opinion, is undoubtedly due to the impact of Western civilisation on the World of Islam. We began to realise that, in the struggle for existence, we required an equipment similar to that of the West, and in every country in the world where the Musalmans were in the majority, voices were heard revolting against the old order of things and crying aloud for internal reform. It was a revolt which had and has a moral sanction and we are now gradually observing the vast repercussions of this reformation.

Within the time at my disposal it is not possible for me to dwell at any length upon this subject. To the earnest student, however, I would suggest a reference to Lothrop Stoddart's remarkable work, "The New World of Islam." The learned author, in a very lucid manner, has traced the beginnings of this re-awakening, and its probable outcome.

I now come to the Great War. Turkey was forced into the War by a strong pro-German Party in power at the time; with the result that she lost practically all her possessions in Europe except a small slice adjacent to Constantinople (or as I should now say, Istambul), Syria, Palestine, Iraq, the whole of the Hedjaz and several islands in the Ægean Sea. The Treaty of Sevres practically reduced Turkey to a vassal State, living under

the muzzles of the guns of the victorious Powers of Europe. The Caliphate had degenerated to the extent that the Sultan Wahiduddin practically begged to be allowed to sit on the ancient throne of the Osmanlis with the active assistance and connivance of the Allied Powers. It was at this juncture that Mustapha Kemal appears on the scene, and raises for the first time his banner of revolt against the partitioning of Turkey and the destruction of its sovereignty. How this almost unknown soldier defied the victorious Allies, how he literally wiped out the invading Greek army in Asia Minor, how he tore up the Treaty of Sevres, how he united the peasants of Anatolia under one national banner, and how he finally established the new State of Turkey, reads more like a romance than a chapter in contemporary world history.

The changes that have been introduced into the Turkey thus liberated and restored are revolutionary. Briefly stated, they are mainly as follows:—

(a) *The abolition of the Caliphate.*—The Grand National Assembly at Angora by an Act (which was passed without a division) abolished the Caliphate. One of the oldest institutions in Islam was thus abolished by a stroke of the pen! and henceforth in so far as Turkey is concerned there can be no allegiance to any Caliph. The political and religious implications of this step are stupendous, and it is impossible for me here to estimate what its effects are likely to be. At best we can only surmise, and in the proper place I shall express my opinion on this subject. At the present moment, however, the world of Islam appears to have become reconciled to the idea of there being no Caliph. The position has, so far, created no undue disturbance politically or otherwise.

(b) *The abolition of the Sultanate.*—The Ottoman dynasty was abolished and Turkey became a Republic. The last occupant of the ancient throne of the Osmanlis

is now living in exile in Nice. Henceforth Turkey will remain a Republic.

(c) *The abolition of the Arabic script and the introduction of the Latin alphabet.*—Here again we see one of the most sweeping changes ever introduced into any country. Mustapha Kemal aimed at making modern Turkey learn not merely a new script, but a pure national language stripped of Arabic, Persian and other foreign phraseology. In effect it would mean that the future generations in Turkey would be unable to read the Osmanli literature, written as it is in the Arabic script. To them only such literature as is written in the Latin alphabet will be accessible.

(d) *Prayers in the Turkish language.*—This also is a revolutionary change. It has been bitterly criticised by the leaders of orthodox Islam, and yet when one examines the question impartially it becomes evident that the change was inevitable. With his strong nationalist outlook, it was but natural that Mustapha Kemal should introduce this change; but while remaining neutral on the desirability or otherwise of this change, I cannot but admit that it has had a striking effect on the mind of Young Islam, as will be shown a little later.

(e) *Social Reforms.*—The abolition of polygamy, the granting of franchise to women and absolute social and economic equality are also some of the many reforms introduced by the Ghazi Pasha. In granting equal rights to women, Mustapha Kemal has merely put into practice one of the fundamental tenets of Islam, and to this extent his action undoubtedly has religious sanction.

I have dwelt at some length upon the changes in Turkey, but with a very definite object in view. It is this. What is happening in Turkey now is being very keenly watched by the new world of Islam. In my opinion it is only an expression and an outward manifestation of

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those changes which are bound to take place with the passage of time. It is the revolt of the youth of Islam against age-old traditions and ideas; it is the revolt of those who have begun to realise that, unless there is a complete revival of intellectual freedom, a cutting away from those external growths which have engrafted themselves upon the body-politic of Islam, it will be impossible to keep pace with the modern world; and it is the realization of this fact which is agitating the minds of every Muslim in the world to-day.

It is worthy of note that, while the War left many a nation weak and exhausted, it appears to have invigorated the world of Islam. One has merely to study the vast changes that have come over countries like Turkey, Iran, Egypt, the Hedjaz, Afghanistan, Algeria, Morocco, Iraq, India and the Far East, to become convinced of the fact that there is a new spirit in Islam—a spirit that is eager and anxious to strive for progress, so that Islam can once more resume its proper place in the modern world. In my opinion this spirit is irresistible and already the Western countries are becoming aware of their relationship with the modern world of Islam which must undergo radical changes if they are to remain on friendly terms.

The “Modernist spirit,” if I may use the phrase in a comprehensive sense, is animating Young Islam to-day. We see unmistakable signs of it everywhere, and like all other reformatory movements, it is meeting with stout opposition from internal and also external enemies, but I feel sure that, in the long run, this spirit will emerge triumphant, because Islam is, has always been, and will continue to be, a progressive Faith. The more I have studied Islam, the more I am satisfied that it is a great civilising force. It has such a simple and yet rationalist foundation that it appeals equally to the peasant and the philosopher. Both find in it a spiritual solace, and comfort

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which satisfies them. Both feel that it possesses a moral and social code which is essentially practical. Both feel proud that in Islam they meet on a footing of absolute equality and brotherhood.

Islam is a Faith of peace. It enjoins peace upon all, and because it does so, it must occupy its proper place in the world of to-day and to-morrow.

Islam has a great future, because its background is rational, its foundation sure and sound. The West realises that Islam and Christianity cannot afford to antagonise each other, for the simple reason that nearly two-thirds of the total Muslim population of the world lives to-day under "Christian rule," by which I mean the rule of nations which profess Christianity. The feelings, aspirations and hopes of such a huge mass of humanity cannot be ignored. It is now realised that their destinies are intertwined politically, and even more so morally. I have always conceded that pure Christianity and Islam are as alike as two peas. In fact, it is our belief that Jesus Christ was a Muslim—just as much as was the Prophet; for does not Islam say that Islam was the mission of all the prophets? If you concede the universality of this Doctrine, then you must also admit that Islam and Christianity must work together for the commonweal of humanity. When I speak of Christianity, I mean Christian morals and ethics, and in my own mind I certainly differentiate between Christianity as it is practised to-day, and the purity and nobility of the teachings of the great Nazarine. A recognition of a common spiritual background will be one of the greatest forces for world peace, and I feel sure that for the future both Islam and Christianity, united, can make very valuable contributions indeed.

To sum up, then, because of its practicability, universality, democracy and rationality, Islam will continue

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to be a great moral force. What is needed to-day is a greater spirit of tolerance and friendliness on the part of nations ; and although for the moment the sky appears to be overcast with war clouds, let us all pray that they may be driven away so that the light of peace and brotherhood may shine through upon us. Let us all strive for the peace and happiness of mankind ; let us drive from our hearts the spirit of intolerance which has already wrought so much misery in the past. The Prophet lived and died for *Peace*. The story of his life and his mission ought to be sufficient testimony to the fact that Islam desires peace and will always strive for peace.

Praise be to the Great Arabian who has enabled us even at this distance of time, and under such changed conditions, to appreciate not only Islam, but the essential goodness of all faiths !

QUENCH NOT THINE OWN LIGHT !

BY MAULVI W. B. BASHYR-PICKARD, B.A.

In a few brief sentences I am called upon to strengthen the bulwarks of humanity against an insidious, fair-seeming evil, that, armed with the shining nets of pleasure, entangles and ensnares the unsuspecting. The victim once ensnared, an onlooker can recognise the poisonous nature of the evil, can see the poison eating its way into the reason, corroding the sources of vitality and corrupting the sense of proportion, beclouding the clear judgment of what is good and what is evil, of what is right and what is wrong.

With this brief exordium, let me proceed in earnest to lay bare the subject. Take away the cloak from evil, and the cowardly ugliness of the essence of evil has put little power.

Says the Holy Qur-án :—

O you who believe ! intoxicants and games of chance.. are only an uncleanness, the devil's work : shun it therefore, that you may be successful. The devil only desires to cause enmity and hatred to spring in your midst by means of intoxicants and games of chance, and to keep you off from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer : will you then desist ?¹

To become intoxicated is to smudge and make filthy and to blotch the fair face of your reason. You yourself can recognise a splash of mud upon your own physical person. Even so another can recognise the defilement existing over the reason of a man or woman intoxicated. Yet worse is intoxication for this very inherent reason, that, once the judgment is smirched, beclouded, it no longer possesses the clear-sighted vision to recognise the state into which it has come. It knoweth not its own defilement and disgrace. Wherefore it certainly behoves humanity to watch carefully and to guard tirelessly against all the approaches of this most insidious, smooth-seeming foe, of intoxication.

Wine maketh pleasant and comfortable the entrance to her palace of rosy-hued oblivion. Wine inviteth thereto gently, flattering the unsuspecting self-esteem. Wine saith : " Come a little way with me just to take off the roughness of reality ! You are tired : you have fought hard to-day : you have worked hard. I have plenty of soft cushions ! you positively owe it to yourself to make use of them and rest upon them ! You deserve all this pleasantness now : so relax a little and take your ease with me : it will be for your good ! "

If a man or a woman is not forewarned, strongly determined not to dally with things evil, what happens ? Reality remains the same, unchanging, but wine seduces the senses to think it otherwise. Reason is gradually befooled by wine into imagining that a better state of affairs

¹ The Holy Qur-án ; 5 : 90—91.

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is coming into being. Wine and intoxicants bring a rose-coloured veil between reason and reality, thereby depriving reason of her true faculty of taking stock of reality.

Intoxicants destroy reason's power of providing against eventualities. Intoxicants mock the reason and blind the reason with false semblances, so that it cannot see clear Truth and build up life constructively in accordance therewith.

Now the following strange inequality exists in the action of wine and intoxicants upon a man's life, namely, that they will steal away the best part of a man (his reason), cause him when only half himself to do something, of which his complete self would strongly disapprove. Once the act is committed, slinketh then away the intoxication, leaving perchance the man or woman in a bemused state of uneasy slumber, whether physical, mental, or spiritual, or all three combined, to awake amidst the thorns of pain, the bitings of remorse and the sharp, penetrating points of undoubted evadeless reality.

So the process has been in these three stages :

1. Dissatisfaction at reality.
2. Satisfaction with unreality.
3. Regrets and remorse at a reality foolishly made worse than formerly.

In this third stage, too, a man or woman finds that they have to take the consequences and pay the penalty for what "some one else has done ;" for, truly, when under intoxication a man or a woman is not himself. Now, whereas a normally intelligent being is prepared to take the consequences of their own considered action, remorse, shame and pain is put doubled to endure the sharp punishment of a "blind" action, an action committed when only half oneself.

I should like now to draw attention to the simplicity and the beauty of this absolute and final prohibition of wine contained in the words of the Holy Qur-án.

The taking of wine and intoxicants is clearly, without question, doubt or dispute, designated as “an uncleanness, the devil’s work.” Who then would want to “take a little,” “be moderate,” or “know when to stop?” Nay, the time to stop from “an uncleanness, the devil’s work” is *not to commence at all*; shun it completely, dabble not therein either secretly or openly. Play not with an admitted evil, but eschew it absolutely.

The total prohibition of wine is a vast blessing, a great simplifying of much of the complexity of modern life. Not only is a portion of life radically simplified, but the benefit conveyed by total avoidance of wine is the acquiring of a steadfast sanity, a clearer reasoning for the overcoming of the difficulties and complexities that still remain in other directions and phases of modern life.

Mark this carefully : a twofold benefit, two blessings :

FIRST BENEFIT

Simplification of life : avoidance of unconsidered, wrongful actions, that would bring a train of painful consequences and many regrets : a safeguard from falling inadvertently into evil, strifes, quarrellings, foolishnesses, stupid mistakes, angry estrangements, violence, heedlessnesses and forgetfulnesses, which often, though small in themselves, entail enormous and unforeseen consequences even as the careless throwing of a lighted match, or neglect of a lighted candle, or carelessness of a glowing fire in the grate, may result in a house-burning, a conflagration, deaths and distresses. All these serious consequences arose from a carelessness : and what occasioned the carelessness ? The mind was not alert : it was temporarily off its guard : and what is one of the things that most readily puts the mind off its guard ? That thing is wine and intoxicants.

SECOND BENEFIT

A clearness of the eyes for seeing, of the mind for judging, of the reason for estimating, and a brightness and

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quickness in the powers of action for carrying outright purposes.

Avoidance of wine and intoxicants is a sane and steadfast progression in the direction of righteousness, in the fulfilment of duties unto God, to oneself, and to others.

The total avoidance of wine is the only perfect way. This is a clear-cut demarcation between black and white, good and evil, right and wrong. This gives no rise to a misty field for endless discussion and dispute, as to "how far?" "how much?" "how little?" "where is excess?" "what are the circumstances?" "for some people so much, for others so much!" Nay, in total and invariable avoidance of wine there is no "white" fading away and sinking by hardly perceptible degrees into definite "black," no bemused mind groping to draw the line of "too much" at a convenient point, nor, when the convenient point has been found and the line demarcated, all the relaxing will-power vainly summoned to prevent the reeling body and the rocking mind from overstepping this imaginary line of extravagance and excess: a line strangely seeming to move and to become multiplied, as one approaches it! Nay, nay, but a clear and definite prohibition: "NO WINE!"

Turning now to some of the evils resulting from the use of intoxicants, we find that some of the many evils and abuses arising from wine are specified by the Holy Qur-án. Thus: Sura 5, verse 91: "The devil only desires to cause enmity and hatred to spring in your midst by means of intoxicants and games of chance, and to keep you off from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer; will you then desist?"

Now in being kept off from the remembrance of Allah and from prayer there is definitely a double disadvantage: those who indulge in intoxicants and games of chance suffer two losses.

FIRST LOSS OR DISADVANTAGE

The remembrance of Allah is swept away from their hearts. Prayer and the sweetness of prayer's solace is foregone, forgotten.

SECOND LOSS OR DISADVANTAGE

Strife and trouble, quarrels and worldly embarrassments are incurred, which otherwise by the remembrance of Allah and by the keeping up of prayer would not arise ; or, even if arising, would, by the Grace and Help and Aid of God, be dealt with successfully.

And now, the evils inherent in intoxicants being sufficiently manifest and indisputable, let us turn and consider especially games of chance, gambling.

This social evil is desperately attached, even as a cancerous growth, upon Western civilization. Is gambling really regarded by the majority of Western people as deleterious, as harmful, as a great social and national pest, as an enemy to true civilization ? Yet actually gambling is such an enemy to civilization, such a destroyer of social happiness and well-being. Gambling saps the foundations of confidence : it makes social conditions unstable, unreliable : it takes away the honest value of money and of material things and creates instead a state of feverish uncertainty and hysterical recklessness, prelude to panic, downfall and disaster. The object of gambling is " to get without earning." Gambling is therefore, from its root nature, unjust and subversive of sound and sane financial organisation. Gambling breeds a fever of continual speculation and unrest and destroys intrinsic value and the sweetness of the earnings of honest labour. Gambling is either a spendthrift, causing the vanishing of the profits of honest labour, or else a dishonest grabber, gaining piles of valueless, worthless money, to be squandered as easily and as worthlessly as acquired.

LA ILAHA ILLALLAH MUHAMMAD-UR-RASULALLAH

Beautifully, indeed, hath the Divine Wisdom of the Qur-án forbidden all these things, these games of chance, this gambling. How sane and happily balanced would be society, if these precepts were universally observed ! May Allah aid the spreading abroad of this sanity, this happiness !

LA ILAHA ILLALLAH MUHAMMAD-UR-RASUL- ALLAH

BY THE HON'BLE MR. M. T. AKBAR, K. C.

(Continued from Vol. XXIV, page 57).

The first step towards the ideal of complete and absolute trust in God that he will be ready to sacrifice even his life for God is no doubt the advice given by the Holy Prophet to an early Muslim,—“to trust in God but to tie his camel at the same time.” For a correct interpretation of this saying, the various *dicta* of our Prophet must be read in the light of their contexts. Does not the Holy Qur-án in every chapter indicate the deep sincerity and trust in God which the Holy Prophet always exhibited in every act in his life ? To me the wonder is, how any reasonable person, who fairly studies the Holy Book in the original can ever doubt that it is a revelation from God. Revealed as it was piecemeal during a period of 23 years of the Prophet's life, packed with crises, suffering and great anxiety of mind, it yet keeps the same level of grandeur, at one time threatening erring mankind, at another holding out hopes to the faithful and the humble, and every time purporting to emanate from no other than Allah Himself in language appropriate only to the Great Creator. Illustrations are drawn from nature, from history, from life and from man himself to show that all the wonders of the universe have not been created in vain but for a deep purpose. It is no wonder that the

Prophet appealed to the Qur-án as his standing miracle. As the Qur-án itself advises, it must be studied and one should ponder on every line of the greatest treasure which Allah in His Mercy has given to mankind. Is there any music in the world to compare with the recitation of the rhythmic verses of the Qur-án by the Imam when he is leading the congregational prayers? If the meaning of the Arabic is understood at the same time, these verses have a compelling power on the human heart which no other composition in the world can equal. To the devout Muslim, it is only at such ecstatic moments that he gets a glimpse of the kingdom of God. It is significant that at those supreme moments when the breast expands to Islam, there is always the accompaniment of tears. (See the Qur-án, 6 : 126, 39 : 22).

Perhaps it is the soul's everlasting regret at its separation from its Creator; a profound nostalgia reminding it of its Divine origin. In the words of Lorenzo in the "Merchant of Venice:"

"Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But, whilst this muddy venture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it."

It is "the still sad music of humanity" of Wordsworth's famous ode, with its power of chastening and subduing. The cheap gibes and shallow cynicisms of non-Muslim writers on Islam and what is more sad, the lack of faith in some modern Western educated Muslim men and women, are all due to a woeful ignorance of, and a lamentable unfamiliarity with, or a deliberate misunderstanding of, the history of the religion, the meaning of the Qur-án and the relevancy of the Hadith. These criticisms of the Islamic Faith by non-Muslim writers, including gray-bearded professors, are on a par with the modern globe-trotter's effusive accounts of the intimate lives of people, especially coloured people, with whom he has come

into momentary contact or the war news from the front of a European nation at war with another, compiled for home consumption. It is a curious fact that in the Holy Qur-án, which claims to refer to every subject material to man, there is repeated reference to idle, annoying criticisms from non-Muslims on our religion and we are asked to disregard them.

The Holy Qur-án bears ample testimony in every page to the kind of trust which the Prophet reposed in Allah. Chapter 73, one of the earliest sura revealed to the Prophet, enjoins him to pass the nights in prayer, and verse 8 directs the Prophet and the Believers "to remember the name of your Lord and devote yourself to Him with (exclusive) devotion." In another early Meccan sura, Chapter 33, verses 2-3, it is denied that the Prophet did anything which was wrong or that he said anything which was not an expression of the Divine Will. Chapter 28, verse 21, makes a pointed reference to the conduct and example of the Prophet as a pattern to be followed by a Muslim "who hopes in Allah and the last day and remembers Allah much." The remark of lady Ayesha that the Prophet's character was the Qur-án itself sums up the nature and the quality of the trust which the Prophet reposed in God. It is only when we Muslims understand the Holy Prophet in this way and follow and copy him in our daily lives, that is to say, understand truly the second half of the Islamic formula of Faith, that we can get a glimpse of the might and power of Allah. It is only thus that we can be the true sons of Islam and subordinate our own wills and desires to those of Allah and rise above all circumstances. In other words, it is only when we develop the light of Muhammad which is implanted in the breasts of every one of us to the highest perfection, and make of ourselves a miniature Prophet Muhammad, that we can understand and appreciate the

full significance of the universe and life. Let me at this stage describe briefly how the great Sufi scholar—Saint Muhayedin el Arabi explains in the “Futuhatul Makkiya,” the significance of the daily prayers in strengthening the faith of man until it attains perfection. In every *raka’at* we repeat the Fatiha (the opening Chapter of the Qur-án) beginning with the invocation that we seek refuge in Allah from the machinations of Satan the accursed. This invocation really means that we seek refuge in the essence of Allah from any evil which may accrue to us from any one of Allah’s attributes, for Allah’s attributes include not only those that lead aright (Al Hadi) but also those which lead astray (Al Mudillu). We next follow with the formula that we begin in the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. The attribute of Rahmaniyyah (Mercy) opens up a whole vista of God’s benevolence and munificence towards His creatures. The intelligent man is lost in the depths of this attribute. Then Allah is Raheem, Compassionate; He rewards more than man deserves; every good action is rewarded twice over, nay, seventy times over. Chapter 4, verse 40, is as follows:—

God is never unjust in the least degree; if there is any good (done). He doubleth it, and giveth from His own presence a great reward.

The words “His own Presence” show that the reward is beyond all the merits of the act and that it is an act of condescension on Allah’s part. The Fatiha after the opening invocation begins with the praising of Allah, as every prayer should. As Mr. Yusuf Ali, in his Translation of the Qur-án, remarks, if the praise is from our inmost being, it brings us into union with God. Such praise can only be complete if it is aided by knowledge. That is why the Qur-án lays emphasis on the use of the intellect in the contemplation of the marvels of the universe for an adequate idea of the Omnipotence and Omniscience of Allah, His Transcendence and His Immanence. It is no

wonder that the cheeks of the Holy Prophet were drenched in tears whenever he read the incomparable magical lines recorded in verses 189—191 of Chapter 3. The way to intuitive or mystical knowledge is through reflective knowledge. According to Plato the steps are dialectic, rational inquiry and then a vision of reality. The Platonic forms can only be apprehended after a preliminary training in the exact sciences and abstract studies. (See Radhakrishnan : “An Idealist View of Life.”) The Fatiha starts with the statement that all praise is due to Allah, and that is so. Whenever we praise a created being or thing it is because of an attribute or quality which that created being or thing possesses, which attribute is an attribute of God. So that whenever any one praises any person or thing the praise ultimately reaches to Allah. Then we have the four great attributes of Allah—*Rabb*, *Rahman*, *Raheem* and King of the Day of Judgment. (See the opening chapter of the Qur-án). The late Al Haj Khwaja Kamal-ud-din has written extensively on these four attributes and nothing need be said further. *Malik*, or King of the Day of Judgment, does not only mean that Allah is the King on the last day. He is the King at every instant of time, because His rules and laws operate and have full validity at every point instant. I wonder if any of my readers have ever watched the onset of a wave towards the shore. Have they noticed how a straight wave gradually assumes the contour of the shore as it approaches it ? As Sir Walter Bragg explains, it is due to the effect of the friction from the shelving shore on each atom of the sea water. The same phenomenon can be observed when a line of soldiers marches over rough ground. The friction causes each molecule to incline in the same direction as the shore till at last the whole wave adopts the contour of the shore. It is thus that Allah’s laws work in every little incident or event at every instant in this universe. This illustration will serve to indicate

how knowledge helps to unify the human personality with God. Allah says in Chapter 2, verse 152, "Remember Me and I will remember you." Allah's remembrance of the suppliant is in direct proportion to the amount of knowledge and intensity of feeling and emotion the person praying puts into his remembrance of Allah. This promise of Allah to remember a tiny puny creature like man is an act of grace from Allah and it is for this reason that the suppliant assumes the position of Ruku' or bowing, and repeats three times "Glory be to God, the greatest of all", meaning Allah is greater than man can see with his sight, imagine with his fancy or think with his intellect. The Ruku' is to make man conscious of the infinite act of grace of the Lord of the worlds in remembering His slave—the Maker, Creator and Nourisher of infinite number of astronomical universes and worlds of each created being with their separate codes of laws, obligations and duties.

After the soul's praise of Allah, the suppliant asserts that he serves Allah alone and that it is from Allah only that he beseeches for assistance. The sentence is put in the plural, because the assurance is made by the suppliant with the fullest integration and concentration of all his powers. He makes the declaration with all the will, emotion and strength in his power, including the strength of each of his limbs, members, veins, nerves and bones of his body. This is the mystic stage of the prayer, for God says in His infinite mercy that He is a partner with His slave in the latter's prayer (see Hadith). Can my reader understand the significance of God's condescension to man in thus descending from His Exalted position to that of mere man? A Muslim's spirituality depends on the intensity of his apprehension of this act of grace on the part of Allah. This is the manner in which a Muslim is led to the straight path which is spelt in Arabic with the same letter as the first letter in the word Qur-án. It will be

noticed that this letter " Q " only occurs in one place in the Fatiha, the straight path is the path indicated in the Qur-án, which according to lady Ayesha is the character of the Holy Prophet. The straight path is therefore the straight line joining man's essence with that of God. When the suppliant assumes the standing posture from the Ruku' he makes a daring and presumptuous declaration, namely, that Allah responds to the prayer of one who praises Him. It is to correct this presumption in man that the suppliant then assumes the lowest and humblest position of all, the Sajdah, (see 96-19)—and he glorifies Allah three times as the Most High and that Allah is above all defects even when He has taught man to pray to Him thus. It is no wonder then that a Muslim's prayer is called by sufis as his Meraj or ascension, being a copy of the Prophet's ascension to God on the night of the Meraj. And that is why the last prayer uttered by the Muslim at the end of his prayers is in the form of the dialogue between the Prophet and Allah on the Meraj. On his approach to God the Holy Prophet greeted God with his salutations and blessings and God greeted the Prophet by saying " Peace be on you, O Prophet," to which the Prophet replied, " Peace be with us and with the virtuous servants of God." If we keep in mind the fact that the Muslim's motions in prayer are an exact copy of the motions taught to the Prophet by the Angel Gabriel and that the words uttered are the identical words revealed by Allah Himself and taught by Him to His slave, our Holy Prophet, can any form of mystical prayer be more perfect than the Muslim Prayer ?

SOME OBSERVATIONS "ON ISLAM IN CHINA"

BY SAYED MAQBOOL AHMED, B.A.

Mr. Muhammad Suleiman Yin Kwang-Yu has contributed an interesting article on "Islam in China." He has given us some interesting sidelights of present-day Islam in China, particularly regarding the numerical strength of the Chinese Muslims. It is almost next to impossible to know the present strength of any religion in China. The Nanking Government in its last census, by which the Chinese population has been recorded to have reached the astounding figure of 450 millions, has scrupulously avoided all statistics about religion and the Chinese Muslims; and for the matter of that the Chinese Christians are so indistinguishable from the ordinary Chinese that any figure quoted by anybody about the strength of various religious communities, not excepting the Chinese officials and men on the spot, must always remain a mere estimate or guess. The Chinese Muslims themselves give their number as between 50 and 70 millions, while English missionaries, particularly of China Inland Mission, do not make it more than ten or twelve millions. Mr. Suleiman has said that in China there are seventy millions of Muslims, but apparently this is only an echo of the common estimate by the Chinese Muslims particularly of such places as have Muslims in a majority.

Recently a young Chinese Muslim from Paoking in Hunan came to study in India. He took his degree in the Jamia Millia (the National Muslim University, Delhi) founded by the late Maulana Muhammad Ali. He has now gone to Cairo to complete his studies at the University of Al-Azhar. Mr. Badruddin, as this young Chinese is called, has been corresponding with me since I returned from the Far East. I referred to him the question of the number of Chinese Muslims, and he has

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON ISLAM IN CHINA

given me the following details. When I asked Mr. Badruddin what his authority was for the figure he gave, he confessed that this was merely another estimate, but he based his computation on three things. First, he goes by the records of the Society for the Propagation of Islam in China. It has its headquarters in Peiping and counts among its patrons several Chinese Muslim Generals and high officials of the Republic. It has started an enquiry from its several correspondents throughout the length and breadth of China. The enquiry is yet incomplete except for the Northern Provinces of China where the Muslim population has been carefully noted. The Society, however, promises to complete its efforts by 1937, and it is hoped that the question will not remain a mystery any longer. Secondly, Mr. Badruddin has calculated by the number of Mosques and Islamic institutions, which in China stand in the same relation with the population as the Parish churches in England. Thirdly, his own information which he has culled from several other sources and at least he is quite confident about his own province Hunan, and can give the lie to Broomhall and others.

Socially, the Chinese Muslims are a compact mass; though indistinguishable from other compatriots of theirs, there is hardly any sectarian gulf between them. Thirty per cent. of them are traders, fifteen per cent. soldiers, five per cent. Government officials, forty per cent. agriculturists and ten per cent. labourers. There is hardly any regiment in China which has not its quota of Muslim soldiers and officers. Even in a province where Muslim population is in a minority, for instance, in Kwang Si, the Commander of the army, Pa Chung Si, is a Muslim General, and wields a power which even the Central Government dare not question. Their relations with their non-Muslim compatriots are on the whole good. The followers of Confucius even join them in prayer and ritual, except

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for a brief period during Manchu regime when hatred and animosity were the order of the day, and only as late as 1927, there was a massacre of Muslims in Laoting (Kansu) by bandits and savage borderers of China. The Republic, however, makes no distinction in the treatment. Rather, the Republic has sometimes been overawed, as is clear from the fact that when the Central Government tried to sequesterate some religious buildings, it could only touch Buddhist shrines, whereas the Muslim mosques were left alone. Following are the figures supplied by my young Chinese friend:—

<i>North China.</i>			Rs.
1. Kansu	..	..	3,200,000
2. Shensi	..	..	3,200,000
3. Shansi	..	..	1,800,000
4. Chihili	..	..	3,500,000
5. Shantung	..	..	3,200,000
6. Kiangsu	..	..	3,000,000
7. Hunan	..	..	2,600,000
Total			20,500,000
<i>South China.</i>			
8. Chekiang	..	..	130,000
9. Anhwei	..	..	300,000
10. Hankow	..	..	80,000
11. Fukien	..	..	20,000
12. Kwangtung	..	..	180,000
13. Kwangsi	..	..	50,000
14. Kinagsi	..	..	430,000
15. Honon	..	..	100,000
Total			890,000
<i>West China.</i>			
16. Yunnana	..	..	4,660,000
17. Schewan	..	..	2,500,000
18. Haikiang	..	..	870,000
19. Chenghai	..	..	363,000
Total			7,733,000
<i>Manchuria.</i>			
1. Kirin	..	..	600,000
2. Liyouning	..	..	800,000
3. Khilyouying	..	..	620,000
4. Jehol	..	..	1,400,000
Total			3,220,000

SOME OBSERVATIONS ON ISLAM IN CHINA

Mongolia.

1. Syuan	..	..	1,400,000
2. Chahar	..	..	800,000
3. Ninghia	..	..	800,000
4. Urga or outer Mongolia	..	..	1,000,000
Total	..	..	<u>4,000,000</u>

Sinkiang or Chinese Turkistan	..	..	2,500,000
Tibet	..	..	800,000
Grand Total	..	..	<u>36,423,000</u>

There is a certain omission in these figures. The Tungans, for instance, or the tribes inhabiting Zungaria, have not been mentioned at all, although they are considerable in number. They have been scattered from their original home, and they adopted the Chinese modes and customs, and in this respect they are very much like the Manchus in China, (or the Jews and Armenians), that is to say, strangers in their own home, but their number is not very trifling. The figures of Muslims in South China are mere guess-work. Our friend has been guided except in his own province by the figures given by Broomhall, but it cannot be gainsaid that Muslims in this area are in a great minority. The total number may be somewhere between three and four millions but not more. I myself know that in the British colony of Hong Kong, there are only two mosques and the Chinese Muslims are not more than a couple of thousand, leaving, of course, the mixed breed who are born from Indian fathers and Chinese mothers. Thus, the conservative estimate of Muslims in China cannot be put up more than forty millions in all.

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CORRESPONDENCE

PRAGUE.

THE IMAM OF THE MOSQUE,
WOKING, SURREY, ENGLAND.

DEAR BROTHER-IN-ISLAM,

Enclosed you will please find my declaration. With regard to the laws prevailing in this country I would appreciate your kindness in letting me have your official acknowledgment that I have accepted Islam as my religion, as otherwise I would not be considered by the authorities here to be a Muslim.

Furthermore, I would appreciate your kindness in letting me have such literature as you would deem useful to me for propaganda, as well as an English copy of the Holy Qur-án, as I am about to publish a Czech translation of the same.

Hoping I am not encroaching too much on your kindness, I remain.

Faithfully yours,

A. E. NOVAK, D. C. L.

SYNWOOD, CALIF, U.S.A.

THE IMAM,
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR BROTHER,

As a Sufi student, I am most interested in authentic information on the world-religions, especially of Islam since many of our practices are Islamic. I have a small class studying the sources and principles of various faiths, so have been trying to make some contact with local followers of Muhammad (may Allah bless him).

There is no record of a local group of the faithful, and I appeal to you for a reference to any member in Los Angeles who would be glad to help us to a correct understanding of Islamic principles. I have not even found a recommended Qur-án in the Public Library, so must copy quotations from other sources for use in our "Universal Worship" service. I like the one on pages 308-9 of September 1935 of *The Islamic Review*, and shall use it in future services.

Is the literature of Islam available anywhere in Los Angeles? Have you the present address of Mr. Abdul Sattar Jamal, the donor of books on Islam to the library?

Any information you care to give us will be sincerely appreciated, and the Los Angeles Sufis extend to you the hand of Brotherhood.

Before contacting the Sufi work, I had only a vague idea of Islam, from prejudiced school and church sources. I am delighted

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to accept all prophets now, loving them all, and seeking to understand and further their Messages wherever they are followed. It is so great a freedom, and so vast a fellowship, wherever God is worshipped by whatever name. But Allah is ALL and ONE.

With you, ever toward Light, and more Light,

MRS. ILAIN SAVAGE.

PRAGUE.

THE IMAM OF THE MOSQUE,

WOKING, SURREY.

SIR,

Encouraged by an invitation contained in *The Islamic Review* I take the liberty of sending you the present letter to ask your kind advice.

For some months last I have been devoting my attention to Islam in the desire to find in the doctrine of the Holy Prophet Muhammad the spiritual support and consolation which my own church—the Roman Catholic—is for a long time no more able to offer to me. I have been happy to discover in our Czech literature a complete translation (by Dr. Vesely) of the Holy Qur-án translated direct from Arabic, which I believe to be the only translation in the Slav language. Besides, I have been regularly studying *The Islamic Review* which is expected for reading in the Reading Hall of the City of Prague.

I have found that Islam being free from dogmas that are so abundant in the Catholic Church is more suitable as a spiritual guide for modern man than any other religion.

Very desirous of obtaining further enlightenment and of having a handbook summarizing in a concise and clear manner the teaching of the Prophet, as well as a good translation of the Holy Qur-án in English, I beg you kindly to recommend me some such works indicating their price and the name of the bookseller where I can order them.

I greatly regret that I have no English post-stamps to attach for your reply. Therefore, I beg to enclose a corresponding international Coupon Reponse.

Kindly excuse my request, and believe me, Sir.

Gratefully yours,

(Sd.) Fr. R.

MUHAMMAD THE GREATEST SOCIAL REFORMER

BY MAULAVI ABDUL KARIM, M.L.C.

(Continued from Vol. XXIV, p. 71).

Besides raising immensely the social and legal status of women, Hazrat Muhammad did much to minimise their domestic and conjugal hardships. Polygamy originated, like polyandry, in sheer necessity on account of the preponderance of females and dearth of males caused by frequent tribal wars and clannish quarrels and tragedies incidental to a nomadic and barbaric life. Polygamy thus came to be regarded, in course of time, as a recognised institution among all the Eastern nations of antiquity, and it continued to flourish even when the necessity for protecting women from starvation and destitution had ceased. Besides, its practice by the prophets and patriarchs of old gave it a religious sanction. The Bible does not prohibit it. It was the Nicene Council of 320 A.D. that advocated monogamy. But the prohibitory laws of the Christian Empire failed to stamp out this evil custom and merely served to lower it into morganatic and underground channels. By the time of Hazrat Muhammad it had attained such universality that there was no limit to the number of wives and concubines an Arab, or for that matter, any one of the ancient peoples might have. In fact the Arabs knew not what sexual morality was, and even guardians sometimes outraged their wards. In such a detestable state of things there was no possibility of putting down polygamy all at once by an injunction for its total prohibition. Steps had, therefore, to be taken for the gradual eradication of the evil by limiting the number of contemporaneous marriages, and by making absolute equality of treatment towards all co-wives obligatory on the male equality of treatment, that is, not merely in the matter of lodging,

MUHAMMAD THE GREATEST SOCIAL REFORMER

clothing and other domestic requirements, but also in love and affection. The Qur-ánic injunction thus amounts to an indirect prohibition, absolute justice in matters of sentiment and conjugal dealings being next to impossible. The impression prevailing among some people that every Muslim is bound to marry a number of wives is absolutely incorrect. The Qur-án has prescribed monogamy as the rule, and polygamy as an exception, in certain extraordinary circumstances. The Qur-ánic permission must not be taken as command. Among advanced Muslims, plurality of wives is now regarded as a great evil, and the exceptional permission is believed to be temporary and only under circumstances socially or physically unavoidable and there is reason to hope that ere long polygamy will totally disappear from Muslim countries.

In respect of matrimony, Hazrat Muhammad did not imitate his predecessors. David, "the man after God's heart," had hundreds of wives and Moses and other prophets had more than one; but Hazrat Muhammad was a bachelor up to the age of twenty-five and was held in high esteem for his pious nature and pure character. In his twenty-fifth year he married a widow, fifteen years his senior in age, and lived very happily with her for another twenty-five years, "loving her truly and her alone." After her death in his fifty-first year, when "the heat of his years," says Carlyle, "was done, the prurient heat of his life all burnt out," he married Ayesha, the only virgin he ever took to wife. She was the daughter of his bosom friend and constant companion, Hazrat Abu Bakr, the first convert to his faith, and its most enthusiastic supporter. At a still more advanced age he had to take under his protection by marrying thus a number of helpless widows, whose husbands had fallen in Islam's battles or had otherwise made sacrifices for its cause.

"The Teacher," truly observes Syed Ameer Ali, "who in an age when no country, no system, no community gave any right to woman, maiden or married, mother or wife, who in a country where the birth of a daughter was considered a calamity, secured to the sex rights which are only unwillingly and under pressure being conceded to them by civilised nations in the twentieth century, deserves the gratitude of humanity. If Muhammad had done nothing more, his claim to be a benefactor of mankind would still have been indisputable."

DRUNKENNESS

Unrestricted indulgence in intoxicating liquors had been one of the outstanding features of pre-Islamic Arab society. But one single command of the Prophet Muhammad—"O you who believe! Intoxicants and games of chance are an uncleanness, the devil's work. Shun them, therefore, that you may be successful"—was enough to wean a whole nation from this horrible vice in an incredibly short time. All the wine jars were ruthlessly broken, and the streets of Medina flowed profusely with the contents. Since then, during these fourteen hundred years, the Muslim brotherhood has been notable throughout the world for total abstinence, and the "dryness" of the Muslim countries and the sobriety of the bulk of their population have been a wonder of the world. Can history present another instance of so wonderful a transformation, brought about so easily, so effectively, and so permanently?

Drunkenness has all along been the curse of Christian countries. According to the Bible wine is a sacred thing, which is used in the Sacrament. But its pernicious effects have naturally alarmed some of the leaders of thought in the West, and they have started campaigns of the totalism to put a stop to it. They, however, find it most difficult, almost impossible, to do so. Drastic legislative and administrative measures, costing millions of dollars, have altogether failed to drive out the evil of drinking from Christian America.

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PERSONAL HYGIENE

Islam is the only religion that has realised the indissoluble connection between the body and the soul. According to it all moral and spiritual progress depends upon personal hygiene. To a Muslim, cleanliness, which is next to godliness, is a moiety of faith ; it is necessary preliminary to the worship and adoration of God, Who should be always approached in purity both of body and spirit. A Muslim, in addition to bathing, when necessary, has to wash properly five times a day, at the time of ablution before prayers, those parts of his body that are likely to get soiled in the course of daily work. The Prophet of Islam, who was very strict on matters of personal cleanliness, resented much if a person came to the congregation unwashed and with dishevelled hair. He laid particular stress on cleaning the teeth. " Had I not considered it a great hardship for my followers," he used to say, " I would have made it a *Fard* (an imperative duty) at the time of each prayer." That there was particular significance in this has been realised after thirteen hundred years. The Americans, who are well on the way to being a toothless nation, and other civilised people also, have at last realised that sound health depends to a greater extent upon keeping the teeth clean than upon almost anything else ; and that the root of many a disease from which man suffers is unclean teeth. Pyorrhoea, Caries and similar diseases caused by teeth, due to uncleanness, perhaps play greater havoc with the human health than any other ailment. A high official, who had been ill for a long time, thought that he must be suffering from some serious disease that would at last prove fatal. But when he applied for leave and was called upon to appear before a Medical Board, he was told, to his utter surprise, that he had no disease, and that all his trouble was due to his teeth having been kept unclean. Another official friend of mine, who also had to appear before Medical Board under similar circumstances, was told exactly the same thing. The great attention that is being paid now-a-days to the

toilet of the teeth, and to the science of dentistry unmistakably bears out the significance of the injunction that requires that the teeth should be always kept scrupulously clean.

Similar other injunctions about personal hygiene are not without their practical purpose. For example, the recommendation regarding the preservation of the beard and trimming of the moustache has an important hygienic significance. In the scheme of Nature there is hardly anything without a purpose. The beard is intended to protect the face and the throat, and the moustache to serve as a respirator and screen to the nostrils. Dr. Arthur Macdonald of Washington, in the course of a discussion on the fashion of shaving, wrote in the *Medical World* of Philadelphia :—" You might as well shave the fur off the squirrel or cut the feathers of the bird as shave the hair from the face. The moustache is Nature's respirator, while the hair covering the jaws and throat give warmth and protection to the delicate structures under it, especially the fauces and larynx. The hair of the moustache absorbs the miasmata and the moisture of fogs ; the beard takes heat from the warm breath of the mouth as it leaves the chest and supplies it to the cold air taken in. If a man would have increased immunity from toothache, relaxed uvula, coughs, cold, inflammation, disquamation, and all the rheums, let him grow a beard. In changeable climates the beard is useful as an equaliser of heat and cold. Shaving appears to render persons more susceptible to violent changes of temperature and consequently more liable to disease. In cold localities the beard is an important defence. The injurious effect of removing this protection, even in midsummer, is shown in huskiness and hoarseness of the voice.....The air entering the nose in an hour contains about fourteen hundred organisms of various kindsthe large outside doors, the moustache and beard, which at the very first could stop much of the dust and organisms, are omitted in many cases...."

(To be continued.)

WHAT IS ISLAM?

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[The following is a very brief account of Islam, and some of its teachings. For further details, please write to the IMAM of the Mosque, Woking, Surrey, England.]

ISLAM : THE RELIGION OF PEACE.—The word Islam literally means : (1) Peace ; (2) the way to achieve peace ; (3) submission, as submission to another's will is the safest course to establish peace. The word in its religious sense signifies complete submission to the Will of God.

OBJECT OF THE RELIGION.—Islam provides its followers with the perfect code, whereby they may work out what is noble and good in man, and thus maintain peace between man and man.

THE PROPHET OF ISLAM.—Muhammad, popularly known as the Prophet of Islam, was, however, the last Prophet of the Faith. Muslims, *i.e.*, the followers of Islam, accept all such of the world's Prophets, including Abraham, Moses and Jesus, as revealed the Will of God for the guidance of humanity.

THE QUR-ÁN.—The Gospel of the Muslim is the Qur-án. Muslims believe in the Divine origin of every other sacred book, inasmuch as all such previous revelations have become corrupted through human interpolation, the Qur-án, the last Book of God, came as a recapitulation of the former Gospels.

ARTICLES OF FAITH IN ISLAM.—These are seven in number : belief in (1) Allah ; (2) Angels ; (3) Books from God ; (4) Messengers from God ; (5) the Hereafter ; (6) the Premeasurement of good and evil ; (7) Resurrection after death.

The life after death, according to Islamic teaching, is not a new life, but only a continuance of this life, bringing its hidden realities into light. It is a life of unlimited progress ; those who qualify themselves in this life for the progress will enter into Paradise, which is another name for the said progressive life after death, and those who get their faculties stunted by their misdeeds in this life will be the denizens of the Hell—a life incapable of appreciating heavenly bliss, and of torment—in order to get themselves purged of all impurities and thus to become fit for the life in Heaven. State after death is an image of the spiritual state in this life.

The sixth article of Faith has been confused by some with what is popularly known as Fatalism. A Muslim neither believes in Fatalism nor Predestination ; he believes in Premeasurement. Everything created by God is for good in the given use and under the given circumstances. Its abuse is evil and suffering.

PILLARS OF ISLAM.—These are five in number : (1) Declaration of faith in the Oneness of God, and in the Divine Messengership of Muhammad ; (2) Prayer ; (3) Fasting ; (4) Almsgiving ; (5) Pilgrimage to the Holy Shrine at Mecca.

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.—The Muslims worship One God—the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Just, the Cherisher of All the

Worlds, the Friend, the Guide, the Helper. There is none like Him. He has no partner. He is neither begotten nor has He begotten any son or daughter. He is Indivisible in Person. He is the Light of the Heavens and the Earth, the Merciful, the Compassionate, the Glorious, the Magnificent, the Beautiful, the Eternal, the Infinite, the First and the Last.

FAITH AND ACTION.—Faith without action is a dead letter. Faith by itself is insufficient, unless translated into action. A Muslim believes in his own personal accountability for his actions in this life and in the hereafter. Each must bear his own burden and none can expiate for another's sin.

ETHICS OF ISLAM.—"Imbue yourself with Divine Attributes," says the noble Prophet. God is the prototype of man, and His Attributes form the basis of Muslim ethics. Righteousness in Islam consists in leading a life in complete harmony with the Divine Attributes. To act otherwise is sin.

CAPABILITIES OF MAN IN ISLAM.—The Muslim believes in the inherent sinlessness of man's nature, which, made of the goodliest fibre, is capable of unlimited progress, setting him above the angels, and leading him to the border of Divinity.

THE POSITION OF WOMAN IN ISLAM.—Man and woman come from the same essence, possess the same soul, and they have been equipped with equal capability for intellectual, spiritual and moral attainments. Islam places man and woman under the like obligations, the one to the other.

EQUALITY OF MANKIND AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF ISLAM.—Islam is the religion of the Unity of God and the equality of mankind. Lineage, riches and family honours are accidental things; virtue and the service of humanity are the matters of real merit. Distinctions of colour, race and creed are unknown in the ranks of Islam. All mankind is of one family, and Islam has succeeded in welding the black and the white into one fraternal whole.

PERSONAL JUDGMENT.—Islam encourages the exercise of personal judgment and respects difference of opinion, which, according to the sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, is a blessing of God.

KNOWLEDGE.—The pursuit of knowledge is a duty in Islam, and it is the acquisition of knowledge that makes men superior to angels.

SANCTITY OF LABOUR.—Every labour which enables man to live honestly is respected. Idleness is deemed a sin.

CHARITY.—All the faculties of man have been given to him as a trust from God, for the benefit of his fellow-creatures. It is man's duty to live for others, and his charities must be applied without any distinction of persons. Charity in Islam brings man nearer to God. Charity and the giving of alms have been made obligatory, and every person who possesses property above a certain limit has to pay a tax, levied on the rich for the benefit of the poor.